



Our Focus

The Kentucky Nutrition Education Program, as part of the University of Kentucky Cooperative Extension Service, encompasses two separate USDA programs: The Expanded Food and Nutrition Education Program (EFNEP) and the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program Education (SNAP-Ed). Both programs utilize agents and assistants to provide educational opportunities for limited-resource individuals and families to acquire knowledge, develop skills, and change behaviors for improved health and well-being.

Our Challenge

Poverty

According to US Census estimates for 2017, the median household income in Kentucky is **\$48,332**, almost 20% lower than the U.S. median household income of **\$60,336**.¹ Kentucky also has higher percentages of poverty and food insecurity among its population compared to census estimate for the United States overall.

	Kentucky	U.S.
Total Poverty	17.1%	13.4%
Child Poverty	22.1%	18.4%
Food Insecurity	14.7%	12.3%

In 2017, an estimated **1,503** Cumberland County residents lived in poverty, and an estimated **471** were children under 18.¹

Obesity

Today, about half of all Americans have one or more chronic diseases, often related to poor diet and physical inactivity.² These include high blood pressure, cardiovascular disease, type 2 diabetes and stroke.



In 2017, the percentage of obese adults in Kentucky was **34.3%**, ranking it in the top 10 states for highest obesity rates in the country. The percentage of physically inactive Kentuckians was **34.4%**, ranking it as the most physically inactive state in the nation. Kentucky was also ranked in the top 10 for high percentages of adults with diabetes (**12.9%**) and adults with hypertension (**39.4%**).³ A large body of evidence shows that healthy eating habits and regular physical activity can help people achieve and maintain good health and reduce the risk of chronic disease throughout life.²

In 2015, **36.1%** of Cumberland County's adult population were considered obese, and **33.3%** were considered physically inactive.⁴

Our Solution

Provide hands-on, nutrition education to limited-resource audiences, focusing on:

- Buying and preparing healthy foods
- Developing new meal planning and cooking skills
- Adopting new healthy lifestyle behaviors
- Managing SNAP resources

In 2019, 13,311 contacts were made with Cumberland County residents who participated in nutrition education programming.

Our Results

IN CUMBERLAND COUNTY

Lifestyle improvements

In 2019, 100% of adult participants made a positive change in food group choices and 79% showed improvement in one or more food safety practices. In addition, 100% showed improvement in one or more food resource management practices and 90% made changes to be more physically active. Youth participants also experienced behavior changes, with 86% improving their ability to choose healthy foods.

Our Success

Teaching Cooking Skills at Drug Court

The UK Extension Family and Consumer Sciences agent and Nutrition Education Program assistant teamed up with the county drug-court-appointed rehabilitation program to help the participants with their life skills. The clients ranged from 20-year-old pregnant women to 50-year-old men with children, and in the middle, mostly single young men. Their biggest concerns were staying out of jail, paying fines, finding jobs and housing, and feeding themselves and their families. Some did not know where to start. Most had no savings, no employment, or no transportation, and if they did have a car, they had lost their license. Most had no cooking skills to feed themselves and relied on takeout food or microwave meals. During the nine-month program, they were taught how to eat more fresh foods and use fewer processed foods, how to buy in bulk to make many different meals, and how to budget and use coupons. The 17 graduates said the program is both helpful and rewarding. They have reported successes such as getting jobs and taking care of their families. The court staff also has been supportive of the program and encouraged its continuation.



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SOURCES:

1. U.S. Census Bureau Small Area and Income Poverty Estimates
2. World Health Organization Media Centre
3. The State of Obesity Report 2019
4. 2019 County Health Rankings & Roadmaps

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